Project 3, Genre 1: Timeline.

My journey to become an English educator: Significant influences in my journey.

Footnotes:

* **1984:** Mr. M. was my 8th grade English teacher. He was the first teacher who inspired me to want to become both a teacher and a writer. In his class, I remember spending time writing creative pieces (like poems, short stories, essays). We also performed the creative pieces that we wrote by doing poetry readings, creating class newsletters, and doing short dramas. Mr. M. treated all of his students like “real writers,” not like “mere students.” He was highly energetic and would jump up and down while teaching or when giving us writing advice. He was very excited about teaching, and he made me want to learn. I decided that I wanted to become an English teacher like him: Someone who respects student writers and celebrates their work.
* **1993:** In my second year of college, I took my first creative writing class. Specifically, this was a poetry writing class and my teacher was Professor Ridl. I was first intrigued by him because he would not let us call him “Professor.” Instead, he just wanted us to call him “Jack.” He was a very soft-spoken man (and very different from Mr. M.’s wild personality). Jack, though, was very encouraging. You could tell that he carefully read everything that students gave him – and he always wrote lots of comments on my poems. I felt like he really cared about his students, and he seemed to see the potential writer in each student. I ended up taking four classes with Jack because he was such a kind, caring, and dedicated teacher. His influence affirmed my decision to pursue a career in English education.
* **1994**: Graduation. I consider graduating with my Bachelor’s degree as a milestone in my educational career. Graduation marked my successful completion of four years’ worth of classes and experiences in English and education. As an undergraduate student, I took many literature and creative writing classes, which were very enjoyable for me because I love to read and write. I also took several education classes, which were valuable because they helped me learn interesting ways to teach reading and writing to future students. Basically, I could have never gained the knowledge necessary for becoming a successful teacher without having completed this Bachelor’s program.
* **1994-1998**: One of the most influential experiences in my journey as an English educator was my first teaching job in Japan. There, I taught middle- and high-school level students composition and English conversation. Many of my students were very nervous about speaking English out loud, so they were hesitant to participate in class activities or discussions. As a result, I had to try all sorts of new methods to motivate these students. This experience made me grow as a teacher to learn new methods and to meet my students’ learning needs.
* **2004**: After having taught English for 12 years, I decided no longer teach at the secondary-level. At this point, I made a turn in my career journey by enrolling in a doctoral program in English education. Earning a PhD in English education would allow me to apply to full-time jobs at a university, which became my new career goal. I wanted to teach others how to become an English teacher. So, I applied and was accepted into the English Education program at WMU. Within this program, I had many experiences which challenged me as a teacher. I took many courses in English literature, writing, and education. I taught a wide range of English classes. Finally, I spent two years conducting research and writing a dissertation. These experiences, though at times difficult and exhausting, have prepared me to accept a full-time professorship.
* **2011:** This spring, I will be graduating from WMU with my PhD. In the footnote above, I describe the many ways in which this PhD program has influenced my career journey.
* **2013:** Once I begin my full-time job as a English professor, I will need to (eventually) publish my research in order to earn tenure. Therefore, on my timeline, I have included publication as one of my career goals. Currently, I have not decided what my research topic might be; however, I know this will be one of the “next steps” in my career journey.